

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 2-17 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 1 has been canceled by this amendment.

Applicants note that a number of editorial amendments have been made to the specification for grammatical and general readability purposes. In addition, it is noted that a minor editorial change has been made to claim 15. No new matter has been added.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 2-17 are allowed.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chevet (JP 11-259044) in view of Doyen et al. (US 2004/0008101). As noted above, claim 1 has been canceled by this amendment.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above, because allowed claims 2-17 are all of the claims currently pending in the application, Applicants note that the application is in condition for allowance, an indication of which is kindly requested.

If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may best be resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Kazuhiro YAMADA

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